

184 COMMENTARY ON MACAULAY'S HISTORY
 the Scottish Historical Review.¹ With little
 assistance
 from previous writers, and from imperfect
 materials, Macaulay put together his vigorous and vivid
 narrative of
 events in Scotland from 1685 to 1701. It
 contains many
 errors, and there are some serious
 omissions, but he
 deserves the credit which belongs to a
 pioneer, and should
 for that reason be more leniently judged.
 Perhaps the fact
 that this portion of the History has been more
 minutely
 scrutinised than the rest makes it seem
 comparatively
 more inaccurate.²

The chief omission is, that Macaulay gives
 no adequate
 account of the state of Scotland at the end of
 the seven-
 teenth century. A clear conception of the
 social and econ-
 omic conditions under which the political life
 of Scotland
 developed is essential. In order to appreciate
 the policy of
 statesmen and the strength of the forces with
 which they
 had to deal. Without it the meaning of
 events and their
 true proportions are obscured.

Macaulay begins his narrative of the reigns
 of James 11
 and William III by an account of the state of
 England. In
 1685, but there is no similar account of the
 state of Scot-
 land. We get incidental glimpses of the
 country during
 the reign of King James. In chapters II and
 iv there is
 some account of the persecution of the
 Covenanters, in
 chapter v a narrative of Argyle's rebellion,
 and In chapter

vl an account of the attempt made to carry out the ecclesi-

¹ An Index to the Papers Relating to Scotland Described or Calendared in the Historical MSS. Conunisslon's Reports, published by Professor C. S. Terry in 1908, and the same author's Catalogue of the Publications of Scottisil Historical and Kindred Clubs and Societies (1909) —continued for 1908-27 by Cyril **Mathesoa** (1928).

² Mr. John Paget devoted three articles to the Scottish part of the History in his Xew Exatnen. Mr. T. F. Henderson, in the annotated edlricn of Macaulay, published in 1907, points out a large number of minor errors.